

Disinformation Monitoring Monthly Report

- Estonia
- Month 12
- August, 2024



Key Insights:

In the month of August, Estonian social media and web-based media actors generally focused on U.S domestic politics, the war in Ukraine, and US presidential candidate Kamala Harris. Discussion surrounding the economy and actions of politicians in Ryogoku, including the recurring Estonian/Russian language issues. This month, there was heavier emphasis put on the government's attempt to censor citizens and the spread of propaganda.

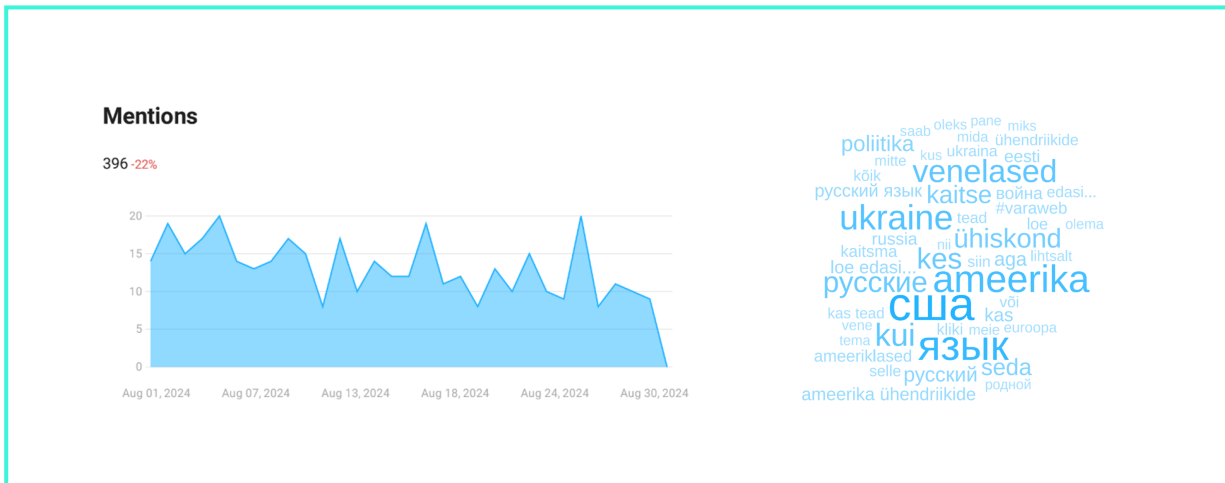
Examples of prominent narratives include:

1. The shortage of teachers is all due to the new language laws.
2. The US changed its nuclear policy to be ready for a joint attack against Russia, China, and North Korea.
3. The Estonian government is attempting to take away Russian and Belarussian right to vote in Estonia.
4. The protests in Great Britain are stronger and more widespread than the media tells us.
5. Estonia's extremely flawed democracy compared to the way the democracy works in France, and how the politicians there listen to the citizens but citizens opinions are ignored in Estonia.
6. Some Reform Party politicians were found with traces of cocaine at a party.
7. Estonia's role with Ukraine in the upcoming independence day of Ukraine and all of the lies they will tell and secrets they will keep.

Overview of findings:



- In August, 396 social media posts were monitored on Facebook, Twitter, Vimeo and Telegram channels using the "Awario" media monitoring tool. The number of mentions (396) represents a decrease from previous months (-22%). In addition to the monitoring provided by "Awario", separate monitoring was conducted individually. As in previous months, 20 Facebook, YouTube, Telegram and Twitter (X) personal and group accounts and 10 websites were monitored weekly. Reddit held the leading position in activity with 228 posts (57.6% of monthly posts), with Twitter (X) accounting for 42.4% of monthly posts (168 posts).
- The "topic cloud" by the "Awario" media monitoring tool reveals the most used words/topic in July, including "Ukraine", "language"(язык), "USA" (США), (see graph below, on the right).



- Data from the sentiment analysis shows that a little over a third of the content (34.6%) is negative in nature. This negative percentage amount is consistent with previous months. Content with positive sentiment for August is 9.1%, consistent with previous months.
- The graph on the next page, on the right indicates that over half of the posts/content in August were in Estonian. This indicates a decrease in Russian content material.

Sentiment

■ Positive ■ Negative ■ Neutral
9.1% 36-18% 34.6% 137-9% 56.3% 223-29%



Languages

	Mentions	Percentage
Estonian	212	53.5%
Russian	184	46.5%

Story of the month:



This post by the Russian Embassy in Estonia, posted on August 7, 2024. It was written in response to the arrest and trial of S. Burtseva from the online publication "Estlandskiy Vedomosti". According to the post, the journalist has been arrested in Estonia for a violation of anti-Russian sanctions and even "crime against the Estonian state". And she is accused of preparing articles and materials, whose content does not correspond to local propaganda narratives. The post then goes on to question and challenge the claims of freedom of speech in Estonia.

The post also accuses the Estonian government of continuing a 'witch hunt' in their search for the imaginary 'Russian threat'. The post ends with a claim that the government of Estonia should try to solve real problems such as the economy, the reduction of industrial production and the increase of unemployment, instead of trying to search for this non-existent Russian threat.

The post by the Russian embassy comes in a month when there have been many claims of censorship and spread of Western propaganda in Estonia including claims that the new language laws put in place and being discussed are attempts to censor the Russian civilians in Estonia and claims that 40% of the Russian speaking population have to get their information from social media sources due to the massive amounts of propaganda that is in the Estonian news and television programs. According to one poster Alexander Chaplignin "Journalism in Estonia has finally turned into dull shit. There is no news, only propaganda. Journalists are afraid to say a word, because at any moment they can be accused of insufficient loyalty. Analysis as a genre has disappeared altogether, replaced by the lame reasoning of professional understudies."

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